

What is claimed is:

1. A mechanism for coupling adjacent panels of a sectional door, the door being movable between blocking and unblocking positions relative to a doorway, with at least one of the panels extending across the doorway with the door in a blocking position, the adjacent panels including facing, adjacent edges, the coupling mechanism comprising:

- at least one recess disposed adjacent the facing edge of each of the panels; and
- at least one pliable hinge member including a body portion, and expanded regions at each end of the body portion, the expanded regions being received within and movable within the facing recesses to provide relative movement between the facing edges of the panels as the door moves between blocking and unblocking positions.

2. The coupling mechanism of claim 1, and including at least one spacer member disposed between the facing edges of the panels, for maintaining a minimum spacing between the facing edges.

3. The coupling mechanism of claim 1, and including extrusions fixed to the facing edges of the panels, the at least one recess disposed adjacent the facing edge of each of the panels being formed in the extrusion on each panel.

4. The coupling mechanism of claim 1, wherein the facing recesses and hinge member extend across the width of the doorway.

5. The coupling mechanism of claim 1, wherein the pliable hinge is formed of a reinforced plastic material.

6. The coupling mechanism of claim 1, wherein a gap is formed between the facing, adjacent panels, and wherein a pliable blade seal is disposed adjacent the gap, the blade seal being pliable so as to bend to cover the gap as the panels are moved between doorway blocking and doorway unblocking positions.

7. The coupling mechanism of claim 6, wherein a front seal is disposed adjacent the gap at a position opposite the blade seal.

8. The coupling mechanism of claim 1, wherein the spacer member is carried on a first of the panels, and wherein at least one lateral stop member is disposed on a second of the panels between the facing edges of the panels, engagement between the stop member and the lateral stop member preventing relative lateral movement between the panels.

9. A sectioned door for movement between blocking and unblocking positions relative to a doorway, the door comprising:

- at least first and second panels, which include facing, adjacent edges, the panels extending across the doorway with the door in a blocking position, each panel including at least one recess in its facing edge; and
- at least one pliable hinge member including a body portion, and expanded regions at each end of the body portion, the expanded regions being received within and movable within the facing recesses to provide relative movement between the facing edges of the panels as the door moves between blocking and unblocking positions.

10. The sectional door of claim 9, and including at least one spacer member disposed between the facing edges of the panels, for maintaining a minimum spacing between the facing edges.

11. The sectional door of claim 9, and including extrusions fixed to the facing edges of the panels, the at least one recess disposed adjacent the facing edge of each of the panels being formed in the extrusion on each panel.

12. The sectional door of claim 9, of wherein the facing recesses and hinge member extend across the width of the doorway.

13. The sectional door of claim 9, wherein the pliable hinge is formed of a reinforced plastic material.

14. The sectional door of claim 9, wherein a gap is formed between the facing, adjacent panels, and wherein a pliable blade seal is disposed adjacent the gap, the blade seal being pliable so as to bend to cover the gap as the panels are moved between doorway blocking and doorway unblocking positions.

15. The sectional door of claim 14, wherein a front seal is disposed adjacent the gap at a position opposite the blade seal.

16. The sectional door of claim 9, wherein the spacer member is carried on a first of the panels, and wherein at least one lateral stop member is disposed on a second of the panels between the facing edges of the panels, engagement between the stop member and the lateral stop member preventing relative lateral movement between the panels.

17. A panel for a sectional door, comprising in combination:

- a frame defining at least one central area; and
- a plurality of material layers, received within the central area of the frame and held in place by the frame, the layers being movable relative to each other.

18. A panel according to claim 17, wherein the frame comprises first and second aluminum extrusions, joined together by at least one weldment.

Sub
D17 19. A panel according to claim 18, wherein the layers comprise a polystyrene core sandwiched between polyethylene skin layers.

Sub
C3 20. A method for forming a sectional door panel comprising:

- providing a frame defining at least one central area; and
- inserting layers of material into the central area to be held by the frame, and to provide relative movement between the layers.

ens a17